



# Housing

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## BACKGROUND

Lexington's housing circumstances are in some ways very comfortable compared both with other communities and with other periods, but at the same time, those circumstances are very challenging by the same comparisons. The Town has largely exhausted its vacant unprotected land supply (with less than 1,000 acres remaining), so the era of struggling to accommodate 400 or more new dwelling units in a year has gone by. Both land development and a strong program of land conservation have resulted in a striking reduction in the remaining building capacity of the Town (see Chart H1). Added housing now comes relatively slowly, but the demographic change that is transforming the Town is rapid and sharp. Regional housing market forces have escalated housing prices with resulting rapid demographic change, making Lexington a community highly stratified in income, with an older population in smaller households than is common in other communities. Those socio-economic changes alter the community in ways made more difficult to address as a result of the Town's now-modest growth potential.

The Town had a net addition of fewer than 500 dwelling units over the past decade, and the expectations for net housing growth in the future are for even slower growth. Population change in Lexington now depends more on the changing demographics of household size and other characteristics of those who will occupy units already existing than on the small number of added dwelling units occurring through new construction. The homebuilders, however, are likely to remain busy, since there is much more homebuilding in Lexington than there is net growth, with work supported by constructing tear-down replacements and additions to existing homes, often eclipsing the existing unit in size.

Over the past decade, more than a quarter of all building permits given for new dwelling units in Lexington (about 655 units) were for construction replacing an existing house on a lot (about 150 units) or for an accessory unit added to an existing building (about 30 units). Neither of those involves previously vacant land (see Table H1 and Chart H2). In the most recent years, the share of replacement and accessory units has approached half the total units constructed. Town choices can, and may, heavily influence the rate of creation of both replacement and accessory units. Under continuation of current policies and rules, it is likely that the rate of homebuilding on vacant lots will sharply fall as land disappears, but the rate of building replacement housing and

accessory units might remain little changed. Barring unforeseen regional change, demand for housing in Lexington seems likely to grow. Stable supply and growing demand make it likely that price escalation will continue, making existing modest homes targets for upgrading or replacement. As land becomes an ever-growing proportion of the value of residential premises, existing buildings, sadly, become dispensable to many owners in many circumstances (see Table H2 and Chart H3).

Fiscally, this housing dynamic is beneficial. Residential property represents about 85% of the Town's taxable assessed valuations, and pays about three quarters of the tax levy. The difference is attributable to a "split" tax rate favoring residences. As residential values rise, the tax rate may well continue its long-term decline, since Proposition 2 ½ constrains the tax levy to slow growth, more than the recent rate of appreciation in real estate values. Even though tax bills will presumably continue to grow, the fiscal strength of the community is unquestionable, and is heavily based in residential valuations.

The change that is taking place in Lexington's housing is profoundly altering the nature of the community. The year 2000 census figures, still partial, are already revealing. As recently as 1990, the age profile of Lexington was little different from the average across Massachusetts. However, in 2000, the number of young adult residents, aged 20–24, had plummeted to one-third the number "expected" on a Statewide basis. The number aged 25–34 was less than half that "expected" (see Charts H4A and H4B). Apparently, few young adults can now afford to live in Lexington and few choose to do so. Offsetting that, the share of Lexington's population found in all age groups over 45 exceeds statewide norms. The cost and available types of housing in Lexington have clearly altered the age profile of the Town. The departure is not typical of all suburbs. In Massachusetts, only Sherborn and Dover were found to have a smaller share of young adults aged 20 – 34. Such socio-economically-similar communities as Hamilton, Wakefield and Newton much more closely parallel statewide norms than does Lexington, as do all of Lexington's abutting municipalities.

Lexington's housing stock is predominantly owner-occupied (83% in 2000) and single-family (not yet reported for 2000, but similar). Units in poor physical condition are increasingly rare. Year 2000 Census figures on value and rental cost are not yet available, but clearly both are extremely high and still climbing. That existing stock will likely comprise 95% of the housing in the Town in 2010 and more than 90% of it in 2020. That strongly shapes the potential of various interventions the Town might choose to make. For example, requiring that 10% of all new housing must be "affordable" would probably bring affordability to no more than ½% of the Town's 2010 housing stock. Existing housing has to be a major resource in any housing efforts the Town might choose to make, unless the Town is willing to make regulatory change enabling much more housing production, which is an unlikely step given the major "cost" any such move would entail.

The Town long enjoyed a reputation as one that actively seeks to guide change to serve goals of community diversity and housing opportunity, but in recent years performance has failed to match that promise. The Town has an enviable infrastructure for doing so. In 1985 the Planning Board adopted a "Housing Element" for a comprehensive plan, articulating goals and approaches that still sound largely appropriate. Those policies, when firmly supported, resulted in substantial

gains in units reserved for that purpose or financial contributions in lieu thereof. Lexington's Zoning codifies that policy within its Section 9.6, Developments with Significant Public Benefit (DSPB). In those ways, while not mandating that development include affordable units, the Town made clear that doing so is key to gaining any discretionary approvals. During the period when there was a substantial amount of relatively large-scale development in Lexington, that policy approach was highly effective. More recently, that has no longer been the case because of a variety of reasons ranging from obstacles in the Town's own regulations to change at state and federal levels.

The Lexington Housing Authority serves housing needs through units that it owns and through administration of vouchers which provide subsidies for individuals and households to rent private housing, with a cost to them that they can afford. In total, the Authority is dealing with about 340 housing units. The Authority's waiting list for rental vouchers alone is more than 200 applicants, evidencing how far the Town's supply of affordable housing is from meeting current needs.

The Lexington Housing Assistance Board (LexHAB) is an organization unique to this Town. It acts to assist through administering affordability restrictions placed on housing developed through the Town's efforts, and also acts as a developer of affordable housing, funded through developer payments in lieu of affordable units and from other public sources. Through those efforts, it now owns and rents 46 dwelling units, both attached and detached single-family.

Since 1990, a total of more than 100 affordable housing units have been created in Lexington, equivalent to about 20% of all the new housing approved over that period. That is an admirably high ratio, but those units represent less than 1% of the Town's current housing stock. The Commonwealth, in a variety of ways, has established having 10% of the housing stock securely "affordable" as a policy goal. Under current State counting practices, Lexington has 796 "subsidized" or "affordable" units out of year-round housing stock of 11,274 units per the 2000 Census, or about 7.1% of all housing "counted" by the State as being affordable<sup>1</sup>. Achieving 10% affordability (without "counting" unrestricted units rented to low or moderate income households having rent vouchers) is a reasonable target, and would require 332 more affordable units than existed in 2000, plus 10% of all the additional housing units created. Assuring affordability in 10% of all the new units that get developed, creating perhaps 100 affordable units over the next two decades, would keep the Town from falling further behind on that objective, but would not do anything more. To achieve 10% affordability, including the present housing stock, would require bringing affordability to 330 units, in addition to those that might be gained by a "10% rule." That would have to be accomplished either within the new housing being produced (requiring an unlikely 57% inclusion rate if achieved within 20 years) or by bringing affordability to housing that already exists, or some combination of both (see Table H3 below).

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<sup>1</sup> The system for "counting" has recently been changed through new DHCD regulations, and is proposed for further change under pending legislation. The Town has been in dialog with State officials over "correcting" the official count, with results that increased the number of credited units from 537 to 796.

Chart H1

**HOMEBUILDING**

Lexington 1950-2000

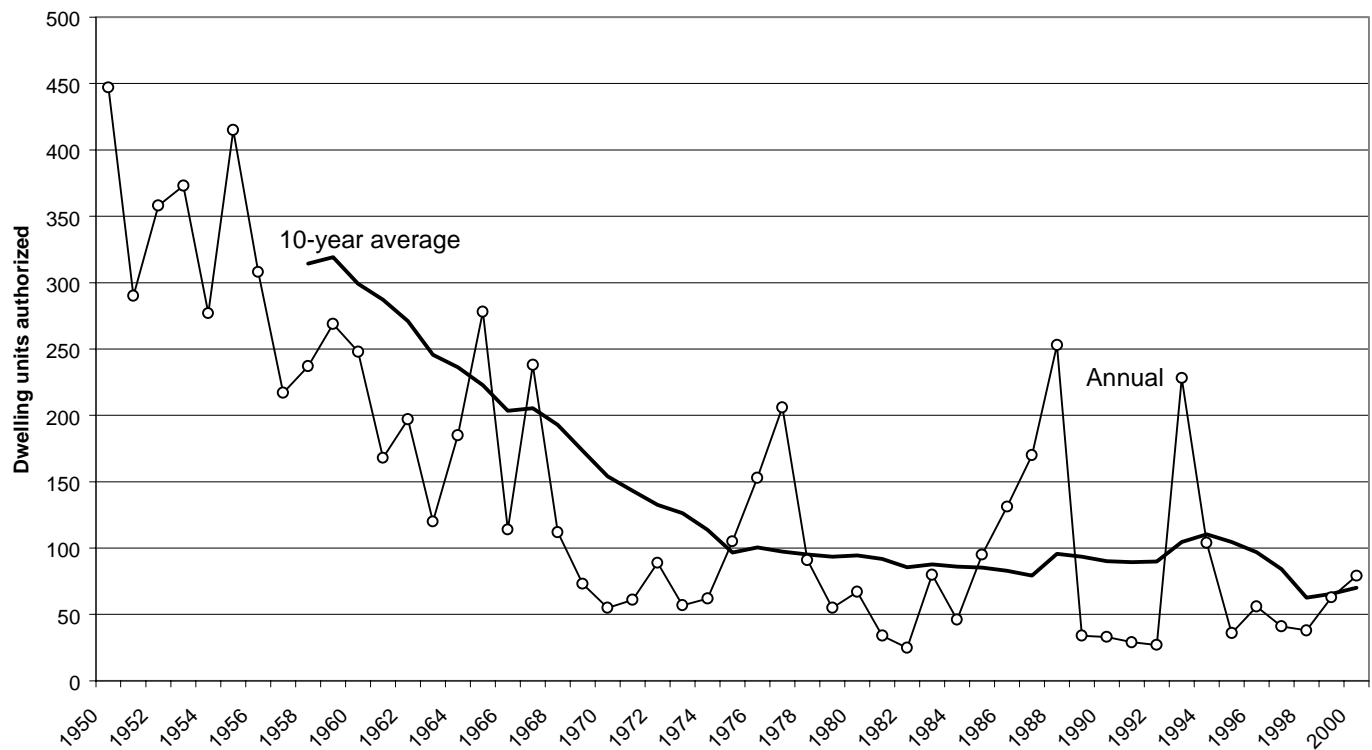


Table H1.

**CAPACITY FOR HOMES AND CONSERVATION**

		Housing units capacity		
		1990-2000	2001-2020	
			Projected	Alternate
Initial capacity		1,623	900	900
	Developed	495	497	399
	Conserved	202	203	420
	Available period end	900	220	112
Housing constructed		734	1,305	1,100
	On new land	495	497	399
	Accessory	33	77	102
	Replacement	206	731	598

Chart H2

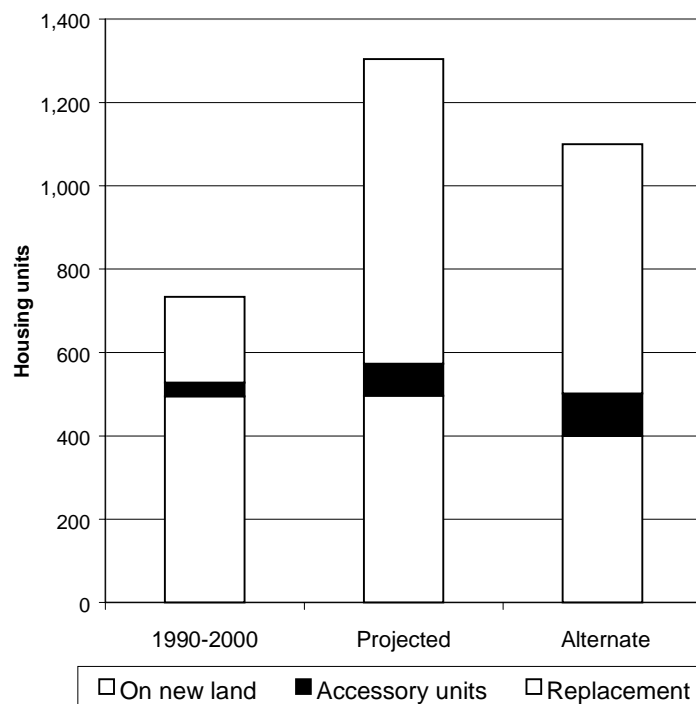
**HOUSING CONSTRUCTION**  
Lexington Historic and Projected



Table H2  
RESIDENTIAL SALE PRICES

Year	1-family	Condo
2000	\$ 451,000	\$ 330,500
1999	\$ 410,000	\$ 288,950
1998	\$ 369,000	\$ 280,000
1997	\$ 354,500	\$ 226,000
1996	\$ 310,500	\$ 235,000
1995	\$ 290,000	\$ 223,000
1994	\$ 279,000	\$ 172,000
1993	\$ 256,000	\$ 180,000
1992	\$ 250,050	\$ 170,000
1991	\$ 239,000	\$ 188,333
1990	\$ 248,000	\$ 78,000
1989	\$ 270,000	\$ 164,000
1988	\$ 260,000	\$ 191,450

Source: The Warren Group website

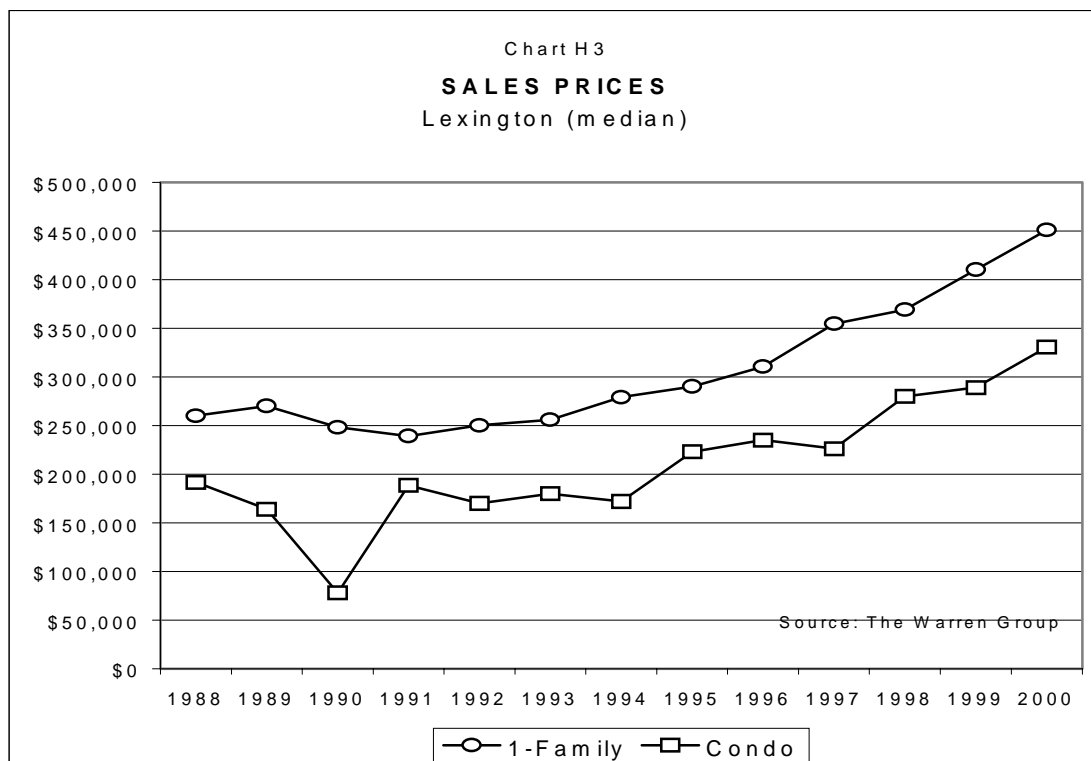


Chart H4A  
AGE: LEXINGTON & MA  
2000

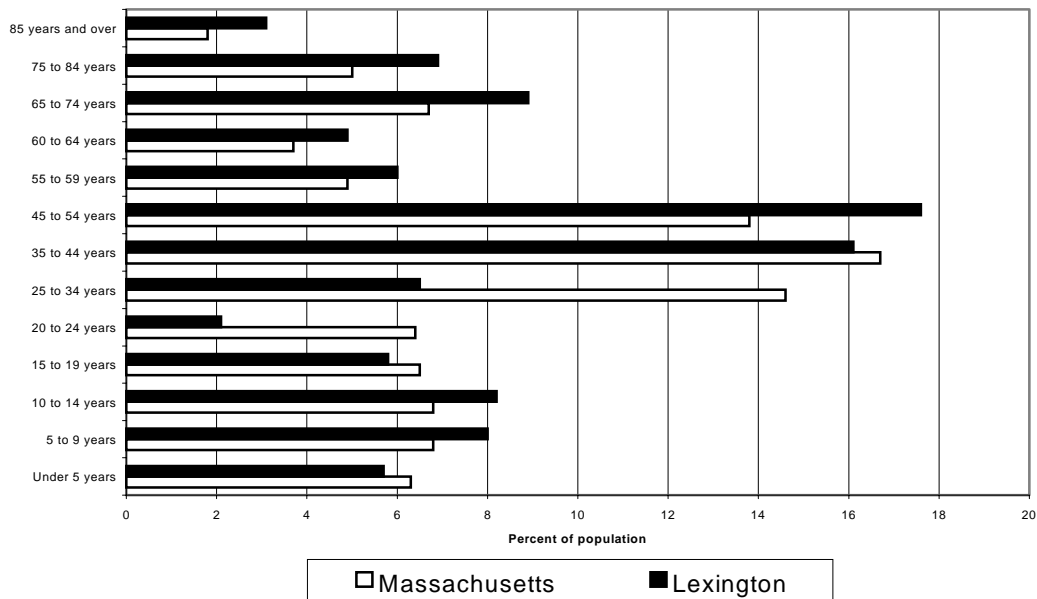
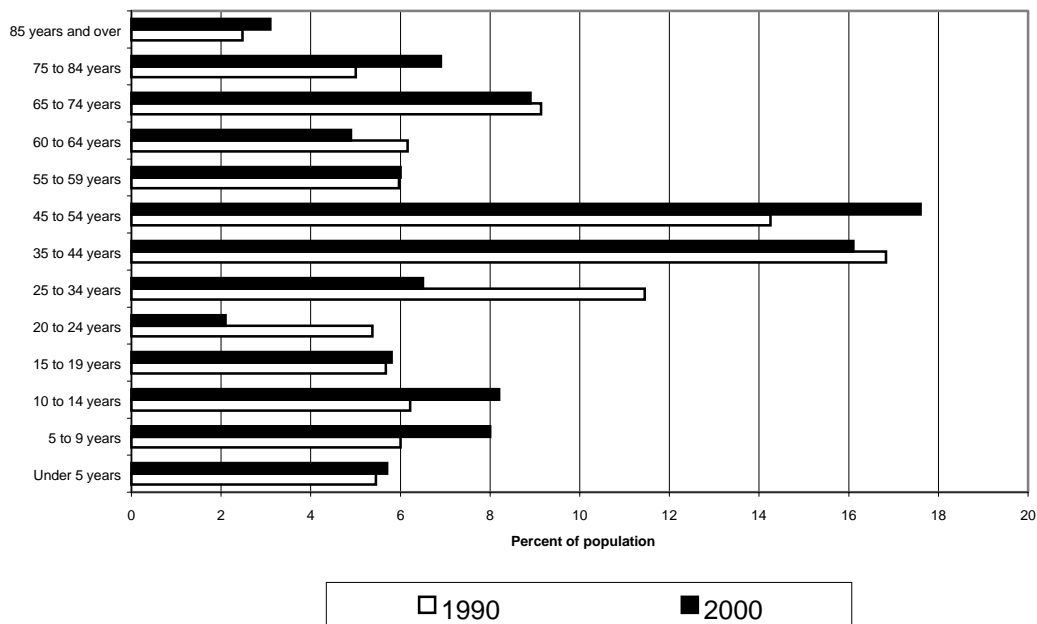


Chart H4B  
AGE: 1990 - 2000  
Lexington





## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Lexington seeks to have a socially and economically diverse community, both over the whole of the community and within its neighborhoods. In support of that fundamental social goal, a basic housing goal is to provide housing opportunities supportive of the population diversity we seek.

As pointed out in the 1985 *Lexington Comprehensive Plan Housing Element*, and as is still true today, we seek a better fit between our housing supply and the emerging needs resulting from demographic change. Even as Lexington's average household size has steadily grown smaller, our housing units have continued to grow larger. Young adults are largely priced out and disproportionately so, too, are most ethnic minorities. We applaud diversity, but we are losing it along a number of dimensions. One clear housing goal is to seek to enable at least our own children to live here, and more broadly to provide housing opportunities for a broad social and economic spectrum. We want to accommodate not only the classic American husband/wife/kids family but also individuals living alone, seniors, young adults, those with physical or mental disabilities, and a variety of others.

Given housing data that is twelve years out of date, but about to be updated by a decade, this is an inappropriate time to set quantitative goals for housing, but some sense of scale can reasonably be provided.

For Lexington, meeting our housing affordability needs will not only require attention to the needs of lower income groups, but will also require attention to the needs of a growing segment of middle income households who also are being priced out of Lexington. Our community is less complete without that diversity. The beneficiaries of our efforts to accommodate diversity are not only those who otherwise could not live here, but are all of us, enriched by having a more complete community for ourselves and for our families to the extent that efforts toward diversity succeed.

We need to achieve that diversity of opportunity through appropriate means. Importantly, that diversity should be achieved without sacrificing the qualities of existing residential environs through unreasonable density departures, introduction of disruptive traffic or other impacts, or building in a way that is inconsistent with its context. Diversity should exist throughout the Town in all of its neighborhoods, not just within some. The principles of sustainability are not inconsistent with these goals, and they should be respected in housing, just as for other efforts.

The small number of additional units, for which there is land capacity within current zoning, makes achieving housing goals difficult, since almost all of the housing that the Town will contain at "build-out" already exists. Change through trends in occupancy of existing units will be a far more powerful determinant of the Town's future demographics, than change through shaping the relatively small increment of new structures that is projected. Analyses made for this *Plan* indicate that Lexington will have about 12,000 housing units at "build-out, an increase of fewer than 1,000 units."<sup>2</sup> While this planning process has not resulted in firm quantitative goals

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<sup>2</sup> In the Land Use Element two analyses are shown: a Projection based on continuation of past policies and trends, and an Alternate analysis reflecting choice of more aggressive open space protection and support for creation of units through conversion of existing structures.

for the housing profile that is wanted, the directions wanted are clear. For the Lexington We Want, the proportion of housing affordable to households now priced out of Lexington would be larger, serving not only the elderly, but also families, including, but not limited to young adults. The share of housing that serves renters would be not lower than at present, and ideally somewhat larger. To illustrate how limited growth capacity makes achieving those goals more difficult, we have analyzed an example of possible (but not adopted) numerical objectives.

- Housing that is “affordable”, as the State defines it, (costing not more than 30% of the income of a household at 80% of the regional median income) might grow from the present 7% of Lexington’s housing stock to the State’s objective of 10% of all units being affordable.
- Half of that “affordable” housing might serve families, compared with less than 40% at present.
- One fifth of all housing might be available to renters, compared with about 17% at present.

To achieve those seemingly “easy” objectives, through shaping the roughly 700 units to be added within the “build-out” limit, would require heroic efforts. The numbers are in table H3. Reaching those objectives would require more than half of all added housing units being affordable. It would require three-quarters of the added affordable units being provided for families. It would require a majority of the added units being provided for renters. There is no likelihood that those figures could be achieved, or even that the Town would want its housing increment to be so shaped.

Two things mitigate the concern. First, some of the change might take place through change within the existing housing stock. For example, bringing affordability to existing dwellings can help in meet affordability goals without drawing on limited capacity for new construction. Second, the actual “build-out” limit may not actually be as constrained as the figures suggest. The calculation of 12,000 ultimate units is based on current zoning, but town meeting can and often does change that. For example, rezoning to RD can result in more dwelling units on a parcel that would otherwise be achievable. Even without legislated change in zoning, some additional units can be created through special permit incentives, such as those allowed for “Developments with Significant Public Benefits.” More dramatically, it is possible for development to go outside of the Town’s regulatory scheme either through variances or through “Comprehensive Permits” granted for subsidized housing under Chapter 40B, MGL. In some communities, that currently is the largest single source of housing production. Finally, new opportunities for development of housing might arise that are not reflected in the existing analysis. Should the Town discontinue use of four elementary schools, as currently being discussed, those buildings or their sites might provide housing opportunities. All of those avenues could, and to some degree are likely to, increase the ultimate level of housing in the Town.



The experience of communities that have approached full build-out in the past is instructive. Development truly does typically slow as build-out is approached, but it doesn't stop, and the "build-out ceiling" keeps being raised through one or more of the avenues noted above. Unless the World changes, Lexington some day will exceed its currently estimated build-out capacity. Departures through creative use of existing controls (e.g. special permits), changing the controls (zoning amendments), getting variances from the controls, and gaining freedom from the controls (Chapter 40B), and currently unforeseen opportunities will in time account for more added housing units than does the remaining capacity nominally calculated within current zoning. In designing a strategy for housing, it is critical to not only address actions within the current "envelope" but also to assure that actions outside of that envelope consistently serve housing concerns, and in fact become a major means of reaching housing goals.

To illustrate that, we have analyzed a hypothetical future in which Lexington's build-out reaches 13,000 units rather than the 12,000 indicated by current rules, probably stretching reasonable reality, but illustrative. In Table H3, that scenario is shown under "Build-out total with special units." In that scenario, the share of added units represented by affordable ones is cut in half from the basic projection to about 30%, still difficult to achieve but credible. The needed share of added units serving rental needs falls to less than 40%, again difficult but possible. Most importantly, that tabulation clarifies the importance of assuring that any exceptions to the usual regulatory "envelope" whether school site reuse or rezoning or special permit should be firmly guided to serve the Town's basic housing objectives.

Table H3. **HOUSING CHANGE ANALYSIS**

			Total units	Affordable units			Rental
				Total	Elderly	Family	
Year 2000 Total units							
	Total units		11,300	800	500	300	1,970
	% of Total units		100%	7%	4%	3%	17%
Build-out total: current rules							
	Total units		12,000	1,200	600	600	2,400
	% of Total units		100%	10%	5%	5%	20%
	Increase over 2000						
		Added units	700	400	100	300	430
		% of added units	100%	57%	14%	43%	61%
Build-out total w/special units							
	Total units		13,000	1,300	650	650	2,600
	% of Total units		100%	10%	5%	5%	20%
	Increase over 2000						
		Added units	1,700	500	150	350	630
		% of added units	100%	29%	9%	21%	37%

## STRATEGIC APPROACH

The housing problem that Lexington faces is the result of regional dynamics more than the specifics of this place, and its resolution will require approaches that are inclusive of efforts that are larger than local: regional, state and federal. Further, as is true for any metropolitan community, Lexington can't possibly bring housing benefits to all parties. At best, its efforts will mitigate the concerns experienced by some, but not all, potentially affected households.

At the same time, Lexington's singular circumstances suggest a set of strategies that are reflective of this particular place. These are those strategies.

- ❖ Housing development is the single most important means through which housing goals are to be met. New opportunities for compatible and policy-serving housing development need to be explored. Actions that would limit housing production or add to its costs should be carefully examined for justification in light of this consideration. In this context, approaches are needed for working with property owners, not as their adversaries, in together seeking ways to meet housing objectives, emphasizing *enabling* at least as much as *requiring*, while also respecting the Town's other legitimate concerns such as environmental protection.

In the spirit of support for housing production and working with property owners, devices such as the Local Initiative Program (LIP) might be used as a positive tool. They utilize Chapter 40B, MGL (which authorizes Comprehensive Permits) to enable departure from zoning for locally supported affordable housing efforts. Those approaches can be valuable, just as they can be disruptive and damaging when used in an adversarial context.

- ❖ To achieve the various kinds of diversity that we seek, much of the accomplishment must occur within existing housing, not simply through obligations placed upon new housing. With new development producing a small and declining share of our housing stock, no imaginable requirements placed upon new housing alone can enable us to reach our goals.
- ❖ We need to assure that new development doesn't make matters worse. A "monoculture" of new housing comprising only large, very expensive, single-family homes would simply accelerate the troubling change that is occurring in our community's profile.
- ❖ Helping people to afford housing costs without subsidy is an important means of addressing the wish to preserve housing opportunities for households having incomes too high for government subsidies but too low for the Lexington market. New sources of income (from such potentials as modernized rules about working from the dwelling or rental of an independent housing unit) or reduced expenses (from such means as energy-efficient design or financing and design reflecting willingness to forego an automobile) can be the means.

- ❖ Even with all of the above, new financial resources for achieving affordability need to be found, including use of a permanent dedicated revenue source, such as the Community Preservation Act, “linkage” funds from business to compensate for the costs of making housing affordable to its employees, and similar sources.

## IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

1. Broaden opportunities for producing housing, especially where that production is likely to include housing that is relatively affordable and that is likely to serve other diversity concerns, such as serving small households.
  - 1.1 Explore allowing housing in most or all commercial and industrial districts, including Lexington Center. Only the relatively small Neighborhood Commercial (CN) districts now allow residential uses. The other zoning districts uniformly prohibit residential use, reflecting the once-prevailing view that residences and businesses could not make good neighbors, and that it was critical to prevent residential usurpation of business site opportunities. Both of those views remain true in some circumstances, but not all, and less adamant segregation of uses has proven to be a means of creating not only housing but a mix of activities that benefits all parties.
  - 1.2 Explore allowing higher residential densities near retail and good transportation. The logic is clear: those are locations where compact development can really result in somewhat lower auto trip generation per dwelling unit and per job, and more compact development is inherently lower in cost, making affordability somewhat easier to achieve.
  - 1.3 Provide incentives for small-scale, age-restricted housing. Such housing would serve a salient housing need in this Town, and would have relatively light impact on the Town’s fiscal capacity, traffic, and infrastructure.
  - 1.4 Explore reducing the restrictions on creating additional housing accommodations within existing dwellings, whether for accessory apartments or other arrangements. Current rules (chiefly Zoning Section 5) are highly detailed in often-difficult specification standards, resulting in fewer than three units of such housing per year being built annually in recent decades. With care, impediments to more production of such housing could be removed without damage to neighborhood values, character, traffic or other qualities.
  - 1.5 Explore facilitating the creation of diverse dwelling types, such as congregate housing, co-housing, and other cooperative types. Again, Section 5 of the Zoning By-Law commendably recognizes a variety of allowable housing types, but the cumulative effect of the many restrictions may dim the prospects of achieving the housing that is nominally allowed.

- 1.6 Facilitate conversion of existing non-residential structures to residential use through a careful, but not onerous special permit procedure. School conversions to such use, authorized under Zoning Section 9.8, have been widely accepted as compatible with existing neighborhood fabric. More opportunities for compatible reuse may exist with other types of structures, but zoning designed to facilitate that doesn't exist.
  - 1.7 Make diversity-serving housing one of the presumptive future uses of any "surplus" public land proposed for disposition, along with open space. Consistently allow organizations producing such housing an opportunity to evaluate its potential for housing use. Metropolitan State Hospital is the outstanding example of this. Lexington's 38 buildable acres within that site might accommodate up to 300 housing units, with more than a third of the units being reserved for affordable housing or DMH-sponsored units. Some have suggested that because of the isolation of the site it should not be used for housing at all. However, given the pressing needs for more housing supply and for the kinds of diversification the planned housing would provide, diversion from long-planned housing use would be unacceptable.
  - 1.8 Explore requiring a housing affordability *quid pro quo* where relief from usual rules is being sought. Review existing regulations for provisions where discretionary relief is being provided for the development of housing, such as with "Frontage Reduction Subdivisions." Identify whether it would be reasonable to seek service towards meeting Town housing goals to balance that departure, such as using the site to develop a housing type that is especially sought, or providing funding to help support diverse housing on other sites. Explore replacing or complementing broad exhortations, such as the "Developments with Substantial Public Benefit" considerations, with specific housing benefit requirements.
2. Protect existing housing that is important for the maintenance of diversity. Over time, demolition and replacement is eroding the Town's once-rich diversity of housing, threatening to virtually eliminate the small freestanding single-family dwelling as a significant Lexington resource. Actions to manage impacts of unusually large houses are included in the Land Use Element (at action 2.6(a)) and the Natural and Cultural resources Element (at action 5.3(a)), and are scheduled for consideration at the 2002 Annual Town Meeting. Those actions would address this concern as well as other land use and community character concerns. The following are further potential actions.
    - 2.1 Consider adopting a mandatory delay in the demolition of any residential structure, regardless of its age, design qualities, or historical associations in order to allow time for the reuse of the structure as a housing resource to be explored and, if feasible, initiated. Currently demolition of structures is substantially delayed only upon finding by the Historical Commission that the structure has value from an historic preservation perspective. This complementary provision would delay demolition simply because the structure represents an important potential housing resource if saved, thus warranting time before demolition is allowed. Such provision has served Nantucket well.

- 2.2 Consider a mandatory delay in the permitting of a new structure on the site from which a residence has recently been removed, other than for housing meeting Town housing needs criteria. Since redevelopment is the common reason for demolition, a delay in site availability, post-demolition, would diminish the incentive to undertake demolition, and would provide an incentive for serving housing goals.

Effectively, this pair of actions means regulating the tear-down and replacement process from a housing needs perspective, in addition to the present regulatory basis rooted in “historical or architectural heritage or resources” (Article XXXIII Section 3.4 of the Lexington General By-Laws).

3. Assure that new development doesn’t indirectly exacerbate the housing problem

- 3.1 Revise the Zoning §9.6.3.1 Maximum Development Incentive to provide affordable housing with a permitted impact “bonus,” rather than affordable housing being only one of a menu of items in effect “competing” for a maximum allowable bonus. For example, a formula in the By-Law might reward affordable housing by allowing higher impervious coverage or dwelling unit count impacts than otherwise, regardless of what other bonuses are sought or awarded. To reflect that, the total increase in impacts allowed as bonuses for other benefits would be “capped” at a commensurately lower level. Any developer seeking to provide affordable housing in Lexington pays a substantial financial price for doing so. For impact bonuses to be equitable for those developing affordable housing and to be effective in encouraging developers to choose that option, they need not to be in “competition” with other benefits in seeking a limited overall bonus.
- 3.2 Categorically mandate inclusion of affordable housing. With a density bonus as described at 3.1, mitigating the financial “penalty” of choosing to develop affordable units, it becomes a relatively small step to mandate that such units be included in all except the very smallest developments. Lexington has had substantial success in negotiating affordable housing in return for, or as a condition of, site rezoning or purchase of Town-owned land, but the option of gaining density as an optional “Development with Significant Public Benefits” hasn’t been comparably effective. That mirrors the disappointing experience of other New England communities<sup>3</sup>. A broad mandate, however, would be different. All developments above some threshold size would then include enough affordable housing so that they have the proportion of such units that is sought for the Town at large. Otherwise, new development simply adds to the “deficit” of affordable housing in the Town, helping by increasing overall supply, but further skewing the cost distribution of housing.

Developers might be offered the option of making financial contributions to a dedicated housing trust fund in lieu of including such units on their site, foregoing some or all of the impact bonus suggested at 3.1 above. The option would need to be crafted with care

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<sup>3</sup> For a review of experience across four New England states see Herr Associates, *Zoning for Housing Affordability*, for the Massachusetts Housing Partnership Fund, Boston, 2000.



to avoid becoming an unallowable fee, and to protect the intention of the Town that affordability be widely included, not found only in a few publicly sponsored projects.

- 3.3 Support regional or State-level initiatives to require “linkage” through which large commercial projects would support a fair share of the costs of addressing the affordable housing needs of the workers they add to the region. Boston, Cambridge, and a few other Massachusetts municipalities impose such “linkage” through local requirements. However, only about 15 out of 100 workers employed in Lexington live in Lexington, which means that any local linkage program would fail to serve the great majority of workers, and that is true in all but the largest metropolitan municipalities. For that reason, a regional approach is a much fairer and more effective way of gaining direct employer support for the housing needs their employees create.
4. Develop new resources and approaches for reducing the costs of housing that limit the ability of a diverse population to meet housing costs. For example, enable homeowners to better afford their housing costs by allowing the use of those homes for work as well as residing, doing so more generously than do the present home occupation rules. Explore where the new concepts of “live/work” spaces might be applicable in Lexington.
5. Develop robust sources of funding to support housing affordability.
  - 5.1 Commit a stream of Town funds in support of affordable housing, as the Community Preservation Act would do if locally approved, or through a different mechanism if more appropriate for Lexington. The Town has been resourceful in finding ways to support housing, but direct financial commitment by the Town itself would be of both symbolic and practical value, even if the level of funding were modest.
  - 5.2 Explore gaining eligibility for federal housing subsidy funds through joining an eligible regional consortium. Neighboring Waltham and Belmont are regional consortium members together with Brookline, Newton and Watertown. Being in such a regional group would make Lexington for the first time eligible for federal funding under the HOME program, including funds in support of administrative costs. Although funding levels at present are modest, they could mean real benefits for meeting housing needs, and may grow over time. Benefits of being part of a regional partnership go beyond funding to include the clout of advocacy as a region, and provision of another setting for discussion of inter-community questions, such as the location of and zoning for housing at the Metropolitan State Hospital site.
  - 5.3 Pursue other creative potentials. A first-time homebuyer program, especially if regionally supported, can trigger financial support from both the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development and mortgage lenders. Banks might be lobbied to focus some of their Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) activities within Lexington, where the reality of real need may not be apparent to them. For example, a consortium of local banks could provide vital support for a first-time homebuyer program aimed at enabling such people as young adults and a range of Town employees to live in Lexington. Explore establishing a program to solicit

voluntary deeded restrictions on resale assuring long-term limitations on resale price and even building size, in return for which the donor of the restrictions gains tax benefits as well as the satisfaction of contributing to a vital quality of the community.

6. Strengthen institutions and administrative systems to facilitate the process of developing the housing that the Town wants without sacrificing attention to other important considerations, such as neighborhood impacts.

- 6.1 Explore organizational change to assure that the roles needed for addressing housing needs will be effectively filled in the future. The Lexington Housing Authority, LexHAB, and to a lesser extent the Selectmen and the Planning Board all actively promote the meeting of housing needs. However, in each case, there are limitations on their ability to take on some roles, such as undertaking non-profit housing development, or actively advocating a pro-housing position in Town government. Perhaps existing organizations could, with some adjustment, play those or other needed roles, or perhaps new organizations are needed, locally or regionally. A private, non-profit housing development organization has been suggested to actively seek out housing development opportunities. LexHAB acts as a mini-developer, and does that well, but has some constraints by virtue of its relationship to Town government and other ongoing management responsibilities. An aggressive private organization could complement the efforts of other existing groups. A Lexington Housing Partnership Board appointed by the Selectmen could act as an inside-government housing advocate, as a project liaison, review, and support group (yes, the roles appear to conflict), and as liaison with State agencies on behalf of the Town.

- 6.2 Explore means of improving permitting processes, especially for affordable housing. Some system choices have been made in Lexington that work better for luxury housing than for modest-priced housing. For example, Lexington offers extraordinary flexibility to developers that are willing and able to go through a Planned Residential (RD) process that includes both Town Meeting and special permit approval. Those transactional and time costs are inconsistent with producing affordable housing given Lexington's land costs. Perhaps innovative approaches can make Lexington a more welcoming locus for those seeking to do affordable housing and can do so without compromising protection of other values.

7. Achieve housing progress in ways that promote sustainability.

The above actions promote sustainability - meeting present as well as future human needs, while using resources efficiently, fairly, and within Nature's means. Virtually all of them are motivated by concerns over meeting human needs fairly and efficiently. Many have the effect of making development more compact, reducing travel and demands on fossil fuels, and reducing encroachment on nature. Many involve productive reuse of existing structures, reducing dependence on many resources, including fossil fuels, chemicals, and synthetics. Two further housing actions are suggested in consideration of sustainability.

- 7.1 Develop an education program regarding how to build with a smaller ecological “footprint,” making materials easily available for all involved in the process: prospective home owners, builders, lenders, designers and officials.
- 7.2 Explore creating a wonderful yard for the recycling of building materials, thereby reducing resource waste and pollution at the same time as reducing costs.

**Key to Housing Site Locations**

<b>ID</b>	<b>Address of Parcel</b>	<b>Number of Units</b>	<b>40B Units</b>	<b>Production</b>
1	1 Shirley St/William Roger Greely Village	102	100	Public
2	Vynebrook Village	48	48	Public
3	42 Garfield Street	6	6	Mortgage Sub
4	Judges Way/Pine Grove Village	16	16	Mortgage Sub
5	96 Wood Street	1	1	Public
6	39 Garfield Street	1	1	Public
7	15 Earl Street	1	1	Public
8	31 Tarbell Avenue	1	1	Public
9	5 Davis Road	1	1	Public
10	7 Avon Street	1	1	Public
11	11 Ash Street	1	1	Public
12	90 Wood Street	1	1	Public
13	50 Wood Street	1	1	Public
14	3 Alpine Street	1	1	Public
15	39 Spring Street	1	1	Public
16	88 Wood Street	1	1	Public
17	120 Reed Street	1	1	Public
18	5 Rangeway	1	1	Public
19	134 North Street	1	1	Public
20	130 North Street	1	1	Public
21	132 North Street	1	1	Public
22	10 Avon Street	1	1	Public
23	314 Bedford Street/Parker Manor	28	7	Inclusionary
24	299 Woburn Street/Countryside Village	60	60	Rental Sub
25	1475 Mass Avenue/Muzzey High School	71	71	Inclusionary
26	8 Emerald Street	1	-	Public
27	159 Bedford Street	2	51	Public
28	425 Woburn Street/Countryside Manor	51	-	Inclusionary
29	225A Waltham Street/Centre Oak	4	-	Rental Sub
30	7 Stedman Road/Franklin School	38	38	Mortgage Sub
31	365 Waltham Street	3	-	Public
32	307 Wood Street/Katahdin Woods	128	128	Rental Sub
33	87 Hill Street/27 Tewksbury	8	8	Public
34	31 Skyview Road	1	-	Public
35	987 Waltham Street/Lexington Ridge	198	198	Mortgage Sub
36	1 Emerson Gardens	150	-	Public
37	165 Waltham Street	1	-	Public
38	561 Massachusetts Avenue	2	2	Public
39	3 Stedman Road	1	-	Public
40	8 Bruce Road	1	-	Public
41	18 Banks Avenue	1	-	Public
42	663 Lowell Street/Locke Village	62	6	Inclusionary
43	14 Woodland Road	1	-	Public
44	15 Grandview Avenue	1	-	Public
45	16 Philip Road	1	-	Public
46	10 Pelham Road/Grey Nuns	90	90	Inclusionary
47	2 Spencer Street	2	2	Public
48	6 Sedge Road	1	-	Public
49	45 Forest Street	6	6	Public
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1103</b>	<b>855</b>	

\*40B column represents units accepted in 40B as of November 2001 (-not yet accepted as 40B)